



ACT
Government

2018

Government Response

Standing Committee on Environment and Transport and
City Services – Report No 2 - *Planning, Management
and Delivery of Road Maintenance in the ACT*

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Introduction

In March 2017, the Standing Committee on Environment and Transport and City Services resolved to inquire into and report upon the planning, management and delivery of road maintenance in the ACT. The Committee resolved to present its report by the end of 2017.

The Committee advertised its inquiry on the Assembly's website and invited written submissions to be lodged to the Committee by 7 July 2017. In addition, the Committee also wrote to a number of individuals, groups and organisations seeking their views on the inquiry.

The Committee received six submissions to the inquiry, which included one provided by Transport Canberra & City Services. The Committee decided that the material submitted to it, whilst informative, relevant and valuable, did not support a major public inquiry.

The results of the inquiry have been published as the Standing Committee on Environment and Transport and City Services – Report No 2, into the Planning, Management and Delivery of Road Maintenance in the ACT.

Transport Canberra and City Services provides a range of essential services to the Canberra community. The planning, management and delivery of road maintenance are just a few of these important services, which provide social, cultural and economic benefit to the ACT.

The Committee's second report provides five recommendations:

- road signage, with particular consideration on its impact to road users;
- more detailed information to the community on how older roads are managed and those roads that have reached the end of the lifespan;
- engagement of key user groups in the new ACT roads standards and specifications
- improve community engagement on road maintenance projects; and that
- road maintenance programs should consider all road users, surrounding infrastructure and other ACT Government programs.

In addition to these recommendations, the Committee's Report also acknowledges the existing work undertaken by Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS), and in particular the work being undertaken to develop new maintenance strategies and management of fuel spillages and other incidents on the road network.

The Report makes 5 recommendations for improvement, and is welcomed as part of the ACT Government's commitment to continual improvement of its services.

Responses to the Committees Recommendation

RECOMMENDATION 1

Roads ACT Signage Strategy

The Committee recommends consideration be given to reviewing the Roads ACT signage strategy with particular consideration of the impact of signage on road users.

Agreed

Roads ACT implements and places signs generally in accordance with nationally accepted Australian Standards (1742 Series). However, there can be physical restrictions on-site such as visibility limitations or a lack of space which preclude signs being placed to the correct standards. In these instances, signage is placed in the most suitable alternative location and in the spirit of the guidelines.

Roads ACT has in the past been made aware of some speed limit signs that were not ideally located. Consequently, these have been reviewed and improvement measures applied. If signage is considered inappropriate, these can be reported through Access Canberra for assessment by Roads ACT and appropriate action taken if required. Any recommended improvement measures will be progressively implemented as part of the Directorate's future works program.

With regard to temporary traffic management signs at new road works, or other works in the road reserve, the ACT Government will continue to encourage the contractors responsible for installing the temporary road signs to improve their performance through increased monitoring of works sites. In addition, separate measures are in place to ensure the quality of work meets the required standards.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Provision of Information to the Public

The Committee recommends Roads ACT provide more information to the community on how older roads are managed when existing loads exceed the expected loads when the road was originally designed or as those roads reach the end of their lifespan.

Agreed

An information factsheet will be produced and provided on the TCCS website, to inform the community on how roads are managed and maintained.

Whilst Roads ACT has set resurfacing targets which are lower than national guidance, these are considered suitable and sustainable, and are based upon local weather patterns, traffic volumes (including freight movements) and historic road maintenance practices and experience.

The resurfacing program is only conducted in the warmer months between early October to late April to reduce the impact or delays that colder weather may have to the effectiveness of the program. Every day, weather reports are monitored to determine if works can occur or need to be rescheduled.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Engagement of Key User Groups and Representative Bodies

The Committee recommends Roads ACT seek to engage key user groups and representative bodies as part of its review into aligning the ACT roads standards and specifications with national and regional better practice.

Agreed / Implemented

The Roads ACT Standards and Specifications for both territorial and municipal roads have been finalised in their current format and are available for use by the construction industry, from the TCCS website. During this implementation phase, there are opportunities for Industry to provide comments.

As part of their development, detailed consultation was undertaken with a wide range of stakeholders, including: ACT Government Directorates, industry groups (including the Master Builders Association and Pedal Power), materials suppliers, design consultants, technical specialists and subject matter experts.

Stakeholders also included the Motorcycle Riders Association and the NRMA. As suggested within the Committees Report the Road Users Working Group or the ACT Road Safety Advisory Group were not consulted, and the two groups will be provided a link to the current documents and invited to comment.

It is planned that the current Standards and Specifications will be a living document, which will include addressing comments and issues arising from industry during the implementation of the standards and specifications. Any review(s) will also include wide ranging consultation, in a similar style detailed above.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Community Awareness

The Committee recommends the TCCS take note of feedback on the lack of community awareness on road maintenance projects and consider ways this might be addressed, including but not limited to a community awareness program.

Agreed / Implemented

Roads ACT will continue to investigate opportunities to raise awareness of its maintenance programs within the community.

Currently, the following communication methods are used to ensure community and stakeholder awareness:

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- road resurfacing programs are available on the TCCS website: ([http://www.tccs.act.gov.au/roads-paths/Road Infrastructure and Maintenance/roadworks-roadresealing/road-resurfacing-program](http://www.tccs.act.gov.au/roads-paths/Road%20Infrastructure%20and%20Maintenance/roadworks-roadresealing/road-resurfacing-program));
 - An information factsheet explaining the resealing process is also available on the TCCS website;
 - The TCCS Communications Unit is provided with information regarding road maintenance works, including: resurfacing, significant linemarking works around intersections and bridge maintenance on a daily basis. This information is then passed onto relevant stakeholders and media for publication;
 - Resealing and resurfacing sites, areas of a suburb and/or individual streets are sign posted prior to the works to outline dates of planned works;
 - Variable Message Signs are used in the lead up to some maintenance works on high volume roads;
 - Letters are provided to affected residents / businesses prior to any works; and
 - A relatively recent trend by TCCS Communications is to also distribute information on road works via Twitter.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Maintenance Program Considerations

The Committee recommends Roads ACT delivers its road maintenance program in a manner which considers all road users, the surrounding infrastructure, and other ACT Government programs.

Agreed / Implemented

Roads ACT plans and delivers road pavement maintenance with consideration of all users. For instance, different surfacing treatments are applied to roads which have on-road cycle lanes recognising that cycle lanes require different materials to provide a smoother riding surface for cyclists.

Similarly, car parks are now resurfaced using different materials to roads, to provide for a smoother surface for wheelchair users, prams or trolleys.

The resurfacing program is quite complex. On the territorial road network, road pavement defects are identified through mechanistic surveys with this data being interpreted by a computer model to identify the type of method (treatment) to improve road pavements or remove defects.

For the municipal road network, due to its lower traffic loading, visual inspections are undertaken and suitable treatment methods determined. In the majority of cases, cracking is the predominant defect, so the treatment involves sealing the cracks and then applying a chip seal to the road pavement to prevent water ingress and improve skid resistance.

Road maintenance is planned and delivered carefully, in order to minimise the impact various road users and the surrounding infrastructure. For example, temporarily blocking drains during the resealing of road surfaces is undertaken to prevent any reseat materials from entering the drainage system and polluting water courses.

Roads ACT already undertakes consultation with many other areas of the ACT Government and the public when preparing and finalising annual maintenance programs such as the annual resurfacing program. This includes, local residents, business, cycling and pedestrian advocates including, but not limited to the ACT Government Directorates listed below:

- Capital Works (TCCS) – responsible for designing / constructing new road improvements (i.e. Horse Park Drive duplication, Town Centre upgrades, etc);
- City Presentation – responsible for managing city infrastructure, parks and open spaces, playgrounds and mowing verges, etc;
- Transport Canberra – responsible for public transport services and Light Rail;
- Capital Works (CMTEDD) - responsible for designing / constructing new infrastructure to support development (i.e. John Gorton Drive, etc); and
- Education and Health for works adjacent to their facilities.

This consultation process allows Directorates to potentially combine projects to achieve best value, or minimise disruption to the community during construction works.